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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews seven parent education resources for adults with low English proficiency, focusing on materials that are flexible and adaptable to parent education programs. Each review lists the name and publisher of the resource, date of publication, cost, intended audience, content, goals, format, and reviewer comments. The resources include: (1) "Nurturing Program for Parents and Young Children" (Family Development Resources), a remedial parenting skills program; (2) "Small Wonder" (American Guidance Service), which uses activity cards to explain child development; (3) "Child Care Picture Books" (Minnesota Early Learning Design), a series of six parenting skills picture books available in English and Spanish; (4) "Preparing for School in America" (St. Paul Public Schools, Minnesota, a series of lesson plans for use by teachers with Hmong families; (5) "Learning Together...for Hmong and Hispanic Families" (United Way of St. Paul, Minnesota), a series of resources and activities for parent education programs; (6) "Basic Parenting" (Family Information Services), a workshop-by-mail program for educators and parents; and (7) "Motheread/Fatheread/Baby Ready/Baby Steps" (Motheread), a family literacy program. (MDM)

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ED 382 317

# REVIEW OF

# PARENT EDUCATION RESOURCES

# FOR ADULTS

# WITH LOW ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

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# INTRODUCTION

The resources included in this packet were reviewed by ten paraprofessional home visitors who work in Family Resource Centers through the Saint Paul Public Schools. The group included persons from among these cultural communities: African American, Latino-Hispanic American, Southeast Asian American, and European American.

Before reviewing the material, the home visitors determined ten criteria for selecting resources for parenting education and support for parents who have low English literacy skills. These ten criteria include:

1. Written in simple words.
2. Produced with drawings and pictures of people from their culture.
3. Available in the home language of their culture, as well as in English.
4. Written from within their culture, not simply translated.
5. Include values from their culture.
6. Include typical songs from their culture.
7. Include typical person's names from their culture.
8. Accompanied with videotapes or audiotapes.
9. Easy for paraprofessionals to use.
10. Flexible and adaptable, depending on the family's preferences.

Reviewers also wanted flexible material in order to be able to match the child's developmental stage. The authors of the resources must acknowledge that children have individual personalities and capacities and that learning styles differ among children. Since the process is more important than the product, a competitive environment is inappropriate for young children. Positive reinforcement should be used in interactions with children.

The home visitors also wanted the resources to have these considerations:

1. an effort to protect the child's cultural identity.
2. a view of parents as teachers of culture.
3. the integration of culture in parenting education.
4. including home languge in texts.
5. maintain open communication with parents and children.

Parent education material should include the values of the home's culture, even if alternatives need to be suggested. For example, in Hmong culture, children must obey their parents, but in America, Hmong children think they do not have to obey. Curriculum should include alternative discipline techniques and explain why physical discipline may not be the best alternative. As another example, in the African American cultures, nutrition is usually taught by the grandparents. However, infants cannot digest some foods that were formerly offered. Curriculum should explain what a culture has done in the past and what we have learned about such practices. Hispanic families often use bottles to quiet fussy babies and hold them in their arms. Curriculum should explain alternatives for quieting children and explain possible consequences of those choices.

Additionally, the home visitors preferred that the print be large and easier to read. Illustrations with appropriate facial characteristics and expressions were attractive to this group. It was important to them that the material be flexible enough to select for specific family situations and that the material be easy to read, because home visitors do not have much time to organize materials. If English words do not have easy translations into the parent's first language (e.g., Hepatitis B), then detailed explanation should be provided -- in the parent's first language. Having resources in audiocassette or videotape was viewed as a positive.

Material reviewed included resources which have a "Minnesota connection." In other words, they were developed or published in Minnesota or they are in wide-spread use in Minnesota.

The home visitors reviewed material from eleven sources. The reviews and descriptions included in this packet are only for materials from the seven sources which these ten home visitors felt were worth purchasing. And the resources are included in the order in which the reviewers would have ranked them.

# #1 Nurturing Program for Parents and Young Children (Birth to 5 Years Old)

written by Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph. D.
and Juliana Dellinger Bavolek, Ph. D.

**Publisher:** Family Development Resources, Inc., 767 - Second Avenue, Eau Claire, WI, 54703.

**Date of Publication:** 1985 **Cost:** various

**Audience:**
- intended for parents, special material for teen-age parents
- for parents of children age four to twelve years

**Content:** Material is intended to provide a comprehensive treatment and educational program tailored to remediate inappropriate parent-child interaction. Parents are assisted to acquire knowledge and skills in order to interact with their children in supportive and non-abusive ways.

**Goals:**
- increase parent knowledge of child development
- increase parent knowledge of behavior guidance techniques
- increase parent self-awareness
- increase parent ability to be empathetic

**Format and Resource Materials:** The Program Implementation Manual organizes material into 15 sessions. There are a wide variety of resources available for the Nurturing Program, including:
- Family Resource Handbook
- Nurturing Family board game
- Nurturing Quiz
- Behavior Management Program
- Program Implementation Manual
- Family Log
- Parent Participation Certificates
- Activities Manual for Children

**Comments:** Reviewers liked the handbook with cartoon pictures that allow parents to get the idea without a lot of words. The questions and worksheets are good for discussion groups or to leave with parents during home visits. Reviewers thought the manuals were okay for professionals, but agreed that there were not enough pictures and the print was too small in the manuals

## #2 Small Wonder!

written by Merle B. Karnes, Ph. D.

**Publisher:** American Guidance Service, Circle Pines, MN 55014

**Date of Publication:** 1979 **Cost:** various

**Audience:**
- intended for facilitators of parent education and support groups
- for parents of children age birth to three years

**Content:** Activities are organized by child's age range to help children discover, imitate, repeat learning opportunities. Ideas use household activities that can have educational uses, e.g., eating finger food, going shopping, feeling textures, etc. Activity cards are easy to select and useful for home visiting. Ideas correspond to stages of child development in physical, intellectual, emotional, and language growth.

**Goals:**
- increase parent knowledge of development of children of various ages
- increase parent self-awareness

**Format and Resource Materials:** The resources include 150 activity cards, a hand puppet, a child growth diary, a child's plastic book, picture cards, and stories and ideas.

**Comments:** Reviewers thought Small Wonder! was especially useful for explaining about the development of certain ages of children.

## #3 The Child Care Picture Book series

available from Minnesota Early Learning Design

**Publisher:** Minnesota Early Learning Design, 123 North Third Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401, 612/332-7563.

**Date of Publication:** 1986 **Cost:** $10.00 each

**Audience:**
- intended for parents and facilitators
- for parents of children age birth through two years
- for parents who are deaf and hard of hearing
- also available for Spanish-speaking parents, particularly Mexican and Mexican-American families
- also available for Hmong parents of adolescents and younger children

**Content:** Participants will learn about child care and development. The curriculum describes concepts of child health, development, nutrition, play, accident prevention, and family management. Each section begins with words to know which are well-illustrated and include short sentences and clear, concise wording. For example: "Do **not** trust baby to be safe. Check, check, check on baby!"

**Format and Resource Materials:** The series includes six books:
- Baby Is Here!
- Feeding Your Baby
- Healthy Child/Sick Child
- Safe Child and Emergencies
- Baby Grows
- Baby Plays

Resources include parents' book, facilitators' manual, and extensive time-tested MELD training and technical assistance.

**Comments:** Reviewers appreciated the simple words and basic pictures. "The pictures tell why!" was one observation. They also liked the organization of material by child's age and parenting topic.

## #4 Preparing for School in America

written by Ann Lovrien, M. A.

**Publisher:** Family Education, Saint Paul Public Schools, 740 York Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55106, 612/293-5275.

**Date of Publication:** 1990 **Cost:** $8.00

**Audience:**
- intended for parents, parent educators, and early childhood teachers
- for mothers of children age three, four, and five years

**Content:** The resource includes an introduction to Hmong history and culture in America. The four units are: vocabulary, stories, self-care, and sorting and classifying. From the Hmong cultural perspective, the concrete methods are presented as enjoyable, but serious work. The teaching strategies encourage parents to participate along with their children. Material is flexible and may be used in any order. The content acknowledges the differences in values between cultures, but, for example, emphasizes that girls deserve the same opportunities as boys and that children learn through play. The material uses English language children's literature (e.g., The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Caps for Sale).

**Goals:**
- increase child school preparedness
- enhance the mother's role of teacher
- increase the mother's understanding of readiness skills and their relevance to their child's education
- enhance the self-confidence of children and mothers

**Format and Resource Materials:** 30 lesson plans could be stretched over many weeks of parent-child interaction.

**Comments:** Reviewers thought some sections used words that are hard to use in the Hmong culture, e.g., "remember" which is difficult to translate into Hmong. One activity suggested using the idea included "or another traditional folk tale," but reviewers wanted the authors to list what those folktales might be.

## #5 Learning Together... for Hmong and Hispanic Families

prepared by Empowering Learners Collaborative

**Publisher:** United Way of the Saint Paul Area, 166 East Fourth Street, Saint Paul, MN 55101, 612/291-8321.

**Date of Publication:** 1993 **Cost:** unknown

**Audience:**
- intended for facilitators of parent education and support groups
- for parents of children age three and four years
- for parents who are Hmong or Hispanic-Latino

**Content:** This is a family-based curriculum for Hmong and Hispanic families of young children. Many interaction activities are open-ended; and many are skill-oriented (e.g., cutting out bird shapes) to promote skills and outcomes to help children successfully enter school.

**Goals:**
- Enhanced cultural identity
- Improved language development, visual and auditory discrimination
- Group interaction
- Fine motor and large muscle development
- Making choices and following Directions
- Creativity and Self-care skills

**Format and Resource Materials:** Resources and activities are organized into several sections:
- Children's Hour Activities
- Family Time Activities
- Home Tutoring Activities
- Illustrations/Patterns
- Resource Information and Parent Resource Guides

**Comments:** Reviewers thought the material would be attractive to parents who want their children to succeed in American school settings. They thought the pictures were excellent and liked that the material came from the cultures. However, they noted that the pages were not numbered and could become easily mixed up.

## #6 Basic Parenting

prepared by Martha Bullock Lamberts, Ph. D.
edited by Joan K. Comeau, Ph. D.

**Publisher:** Family Information Services, Suite 102, 12565 Jefferson Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55434-2102, 612/755-6233, 800/852-8112

**Date of Publication:** periodical subscription

**Cost:** The calendar year program from January to December, 1995, costs: 1 edition - $159.00; 2 editions - $179.00; 3 editions - $199.00; 4 editions - $219.00. Other subscription options are available.

**Audience:**
- intended for facilitators of parent education and support groups
- for parents of children age four to twelve years
- also available for Spanish-speaking parents

**Content:** This "workshop by mail" provides monthly information through resource packets mailed to the home or office. The Basic Parenting Focus Issue has four sections: Something to Think About; The ABCs of Parenting; The Teaching Parent; and Health and Safety Briefs. Simple illustrations have captions in English and Spanish. Blank hand-outs of illustrations are available for use with other languages.

**Goals:**
- increase parent knowledge of development of children of various ages
- increase parent self-awareness

**Format and Resource Materials:** Basic Parenting Focus Issue is one of four versions to which subscriptions are available. (The Focus Issues provide in-depth exploration of a specific family life topic complete with presentation guide, handouts, transparency masters, and other resources.)

**Comments:** Materials include basic and simple picture sheets, which are intended to copy and leave at home with parents. Reviewers thought the basic illustrations were useful. However, the pictures might be interpreted to mean, for example, that there is only one way to hold a baby for a bath. The home visitors felt that there were too many words (e.g., "plain white soap") and many words were "jargon" (e.g., self-esteem). These reviewers felt there were a lot of words, even for a home visitor, in the instructions to facilitators.

## #7 Motheread/Fatheread/ Baby Ready/Baby Steps

**Publisher:** MOTHEREAD, Inc., c/o MOTHEREAD/FATHEREAD-MN, Minnesota Humanities Commission, 26 East Exchange Street, Lower Level South, Saint Paul, MN 55101, 612/224-5739.

**Date of Publication:** 1990 and following

**Cost:** Curriculum available only through training; fee varies with type of curriculum

**Audience:**
- intended for facilitators of parent education and support groups
- for parents of children age birth to nine years
- also available in a multicultural version with particular emphasis on African American and native American parents (Abiyoyo)

**Content:** This is a literacy program to help families strengthen literacy, family communication, and parenting skills. Through children's stories, families can consider issues such as financial and emotional stress, racial prejudice, and choices for disciplining children. Baby Ready includes critical information about medical, emotional, psychological, and physiological aspects of pregnancy. Baby Steps includes information about nutrition, child safety, and coping with problems common to newborns and toddlers.

**Goals:**
- increase parent literacy skills
- increase parent self-awareness and parenting choices
- build critical thinking ability
- discuss and share knowledge about challenging family issues

**Format and Resource Materials:** Material is well-organized into lesson plans with methods to introduce the story, discuss the questions, participate in reinforcement activities, and provide a take-home lesson plan for parents. There are 25 books in the adult curriculum and 74 books in the children's curriculum. Leaders identify themes that are especially meaningful for the children and parents with whom they work. Motheread provides significant training and technical assistance.